

06 APR 1997

Mahathir-Banquet

DR MAHATHIR ENTERTAINED TO DINNER

KUWAIT CITY, April 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was entertained to a banquet hosted by Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who is also Foreign Minister, at the Bayan Palace (The Tent), here, last night.

Present were Kuwaiti cabinet ministers, Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamad, Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Affifuddin Omar and prominent Malaysian businessmen.

Dr Mahathir arrived here yesterday for a three-day official visit aimed at strengthening the 34-year-old bilateral relations as well as fostering closer cooperation between businessmen of the two countries.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir received a courtesy call from Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister Nassar Abdullah Al-Rawdhan, who is also Finance Minister, at the Bayan Palace where he is residing during his visit here.

Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, also visited Al-Seif Palace which will house the offices of the Emir, the crown prince who is the prime minister, and cabinet ministers.

The US\$400 million building, where the interior of the Emir's and the prime minister's offices is made of marble, is still under construction and is expected to be completed end of the year.

Dr Mahathir and his entourage also visited the Kuwait Liberation Tower (telecommunications tower), the fifth tallest tower in the world.

The 372-metre tower was constructed two years before the Gulf War. It was supposed to be known as the Telecommunication Tower upon completion but the Kuwaiti government had a change of mind and named it the Liberation Tower to mark Kuwait's freedom from Iraq's aggression.

The tower has a foundation basement of 18 metres followed by a concrete shaft 142 metres high. The public head section, which is 44 metres high, provides facilities for a revolving restaurant and a viewing gallery for the public.

Telecommunications equipment and building services are housed on the sixth floor and various antennae are mounted on the concrete and steel masts. These provide mainly low power broadcasting services for ministries and departments such as police and fire services.

Today, Dr Mahathir will head the Malaysian delegation at the bilateral meeting to be held at the Bayan Palace. He is scheduled to attend a reception with Kuwaiti and Malaysian businessmen at a hotel here in the afternoon. -- BERNAMA

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